

REMARKS

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the foregoing, the specification and claims 2, 4 and 5 have been amended. Claims 1 and 3 have been cancelled. Claims 2 and 4-7 are pending and under consideration.

OBJECTION TO THE SPECIFICATION

The Examiner objected to the specification based on various informalities. Appropriate correction has been made to the specification. In addition to the informalities noted by the Examiner, the second full paragraph of page 5 has been amended to include reference numeral 28, designating a cover, which was shown in the drawings but not listed in the specification.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 USC 112

Claims 2-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Appropriate correction has been made to claims 2 and 5. Specifically, claim 2 was amended to recite a side extension, which is bent to be coplanar with a front of the door, where an end of the side extension is bent inward to form an insertion groove at an inner surface of the side extension for inserting the buffer member and the deviating prevention member. Support for this amendment may be found in at least Figure 2 of the application. Claim 5 was amended to recite that the side extension member is formed with a fixing groove to receive the fixing protrusion. Support for this amendment may be found in at least page 6, lines 25-27 of the application.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejection is requested.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 USC 102

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by McCollom (US 5,412,839) (hereinafter "McCollom").

Claim 1 has been cancelled.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 USC 102/103

Claims 2, 3, 5 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McCollom in view of Roberts et al. (US 3,995,349) (hereinafter "Roberts").

Claims 4 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McCollom in view of Roberts and further in view of DeVoe et al. (US 2,151,195) (hereinafter "DeVoe").

McCollom discusses a soft touch appliance handle assembly. In McCollom, a cap or cover 66 may be mounted over the ends (the top and bottom) of the handles. For that purpose the web 42 includes an opening 68 of generally circular cross section at the junction of arms 46, 48 and 50. A cap 66 is placed over a corresponding end of the handle and door and a threaded fastener, such as screw 70, passes through an opening 72 in the cap and is threadedly received in the opening 68 in web 42 until the head 74 of the screw seats in recess 76 in the cap around the opening 72. McCollom, 3:33-3:41 and Figure 3.

Roberts discusses a door handle of a household refrigerator. In Roberts, end caps 68, 70 can be provided for the first and second ends of the handle 14 to more rigidly maintain the handle together and to improve the appearance of the handle 14. The front end cap 68 extends over the ends of the primary base 16, the tertiary base 52, and the cover element 64, and the second end cap 70 extends over the ends of the secondary base 34 and the cover element 64. The end caps 68, 70 can have protrusions 72, 74 for mating with respective hole 62' and tab 46 for fixedly, releasably connecting the end caps 68, 70 to the handle 14. Roberts, 3:9-3:18 and Figure 2.

Amended claim 2 recites: "...an end of the side extension is bent inward to form an insertion groove at an inner surface of the side extension for inserting the buffer member and the deviating prevention member." Claim 2 has been rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of its base claim in addition to the earlier noted amendments made to overcome the 35 USC 112 rejections. Claim 2 was further amended to include the subject matter of original claim 3. In contrast to claim 2, as noted in the Office Action, McCollom does not discuss a deviating prevention member located in the insertion groove. This deficiency in McCollom is not cured by Roberts, however. In McCollom, a cap or cover 66 (similar to the cover 28 shown in Figure 2 of the present application) may be mounted over the ends of the handles. In McCollom, no mention is made that this cap or cover 66 retains the liner of soft foam 58 discussed in McCollom from coming loose from the handles 16, 18. Similar to McCollom, Roberts discusses end caps 68, 70 that are provided for the first and second ends of the handle 14 to more rigidly maintain the handle together and to improve the appearance of the handle 14. Roberts does not discuss that the end caps 16, 18 retain a foam lining in place or prevent it from deviating within a groove formed in a handle.

As such, there is no motivation to replace the cover 66 of McCollom with the end caps 68, 70 of Roberts since neither of the relied upon references discusses retaining a buffer member. Further, neither McCollom nor Roberts contain any discussion of deviating prevention

members as recited in independent claim 2. As such, it is respectfully submitted that the deviating prevention members recited in claim 2 differ from the cover 66 of McCollom and the end caps 68 of Roberts.

Claim 3 has been cancelled. Claims 4-7 depend on claim 2 and are therefore believed to be allowable for at least the foregoing reasons. Further, claims 4-7 recite features that patentably distinguish over McCollom, Roberts and DeVoe, taken alone or in combination. For example, claim 4 recites that the buffer member is formed with an uneven portion for preventing slippage on an outer surface thereof to be gripped by the user.

Withdrawal of the foregoing rejections is requested.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: June 30, 2006

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